



Quick Notes

from the Idaho Office of Highway Safety

December 21, 2010

Highway Safety Summit

April 21, 2011 – Pocatello, ID

Idaho Transportation Department - PO Box 7129 – Boise, ID 83707-1129
P: (208) 334-8100 F: (208) 334-4430 - - www.itd.idaho.gov/ohs

General Message from the Highway Safety Manager

Hi Highway Safety Partners,

Here it is almost Christmas. I hope you have most of your preparations made for your gatherings. And for the officers that are working on Christmas to provide for our safety, thank you! It is greatly appreciated that you are sacrificing some family time on the day that most will be celebrating with their families. We appreciate it.

I want to share some news of a project that I am working on because it pertains to you. I have been asked to help Vermont update their Strategic Highway Safety Plan in January. Ohio and Pennsylvania will also be assisting in the Peer to Peer Exchange. We have had several meetings to discuss what it will be important for me to convey to help them on their path. Some of the key elements are leadership, communications, partnerships, and linking our goals to projects. I very much appreciate hearing from the outside what is most impressive about what we are doing.

Leadership is seen as something that Idaho excels at with support from the top at the Idaho Transportation Department and our partners. This brings more visibility and credibility to our Strategic Highway Safety Plan. This is demonstrated most recently in Executive Overview in ITD's Long Range Transportation Plan, "Idaho on the Move," where Idaho's Strategic Highway Safety Plan is referred to on the first page of the document. Leadership is also visible as other agencies support the effort. This is demonstrated by the agencies serving on the SHSP Oversight Team and Emphasis Area Team Leaders.

Communications is seen as something Idaho does really well. These Quick Notes are seen as especially effective at keeping all of our audience of over 800 safety advocates informed and motivated toward a common goal.

Partnerships are a key element that we do well. This is demonstrated by the many players that serve on the Emphasis Area Teams. In addition, from my perspective from having served in the highway safety arena since 1999, I feel that there are many more people taking responsibility for moving the ball forward. In years past, it seemed that it was primarily our responsibility to take the lead. Now I sense that many people are taking the lead in various areas of safety. I would guess that the SHSP process and Emphasis Area Teams are key to this change. I suppose I need to find a way to quantify this but in the meantime, I feel the difference and it is wonderful!

I was also asked to show how we link our emphasis areas to our funding of projects in the behavioral safety arena. From an outside perspective, we do a great job of funding projects that address the SHSP Emphasis Areas. This is illustrated in our Highway Safety Performance Plan and Annual Evaluation. Our Highway Safety Performance Plan can be viewed at <http://www.itd.idaho.gov/ohs/programs.htm>. I will be pleased to share how we do this.

Before closing, thanks again for all you are doing to keep families whole during this past year. Have a very special Christmas with your family and friends.

Mary

Primary Laws and Fine Levels are Associated With Increases in Seat Belt Use, 1997-2008

NHTSA Traffic Tech Technology Transfer Series – November 2010

Increasing seat belt usage in the United States has proved to be a show and difficult task. It has taken about 30 years since NHTSA conducted the first seat belt and child restraint workshops in 1978 to reach 84% usage in 2009. In general, seat belt laws and their enforcement have received the greatest emphasis since 1984. There has been less emphasis on increasing fine amounts as a means to increase usage, in spite of positive circumstantial and research evidence.

Bedford Research and the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation conducted a study for NHTSA to determine the relative impact of primary seat belt laws and fine amounts on seat belt use. The research examined changes in use associated with past activities and estimated gains that might be expected in the future.

To view the complete summary click on the link http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/traffic_tech/TT400.pdf

Reducing Fatalities Australia Style

Here is a link to an Australia study on how they are reducing traffic fatalities. They are very aggressive in reducing traffic deaths and are a resource for ideas for others. As we look for ways to reduce traffic deaths, we need to keep our minds open to concepts and ideas that are working elsewhere.

http://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/83/Files/IS_39_Road_Fatalities.pdf

Their summary is as follows:

The absolute number of fatalities per quarter in Australia in 2010 was less than 40 per cent of that in the late 1960s. But the vehicle-kilometres travelled (vkt) on our roads have increased by three and a half times over this period. Thus the fatality rate—the number of deaths per billion vehicle kilometres driven—has fallen to about a tenth of its 1960s level.

- The results of the current analysis confirm earlier findings—that seat belt wearing, random breath testing (RBT) and speed cameras can explain almost all of the variation in fatality rates in all states since the late 1960s.
- The question then arises as to whether an expected, yet missing, downward trend in rates because of improvements in road infrastructure and vehicles is being counterbalanced by increases in driver distraction, dangerous driving, driving of unregistered vehicles, and the like.
- Further modeling, building on base-case projections from the work presented here, could seek to measure these effects over the last decades, and shed light on the likely contributions in the period of the next National Road Safety Strategy of its four major elements:
 1. Safer speeds
 2. Safer roads and roadsides
 3. Safer vehicles, and
 4. Safe road users and safer behaviour.

Australia also uses powerful advertising campaigns. This is really a tough video to look at but it sends a powerful message. http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=Z2mf8DtWWd8

Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities for The First Three Quarters (January–September) of 2010

An estimated 24,460 people died in the period January – September 2010, a decline of about 4.5% from the 25,603 in the same time period in 2009. However, estimated fatalities in the third quarter of 2010 increased by 2.5 percent from the third quarter of 2009, representing the first quarterly increase after 17 consecutive quarters of declines. The full Crash*Stats can be read by clicking on the following link: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811431.pdf>



ITD Reminds Motorists to Make the Safe Holiday Choice and Not Drive Impaired

As the holiday season gets under way with festive parties and celebrations, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is reminding motorists to make the season safer for everyone by not driving while impaired.

Using federal grant funds, the transportation department is partnering with Idaho law enforcement agencies to make highways safer by funding education campaigns and high-visibility impaired driving enforcement patrols from Dec. 17 through New Year's Day.

The effort is part of Idaho's Toward Zero Deaths' goal to someday have no traffic deaths on Idaho's roads.

"Traffic deaths are not just numbers, they are family and friends lost," said Kevin Bechen, with ITD's Office of Highway Operations and Safety. "We want everyone to make it home safely after holiday celebrations. We're committed to doing everything we can to help keep families safe and whole."

While all law enforcement agencies throughout the state will be enforcing drunk-driving laws, 72 agencies including state police, sheriff's deputies and local agencies will participate in the overtime patrols. Officers will also be watching for seat-belt violations.

Last year, impaired driving contributed to 1,567 crashes on Idaho's highways and caused 65 fatalities.

"Whether you've had one or two drinks, or way too many, it's not worth the risk to you or your family," he said. "Not only do you risk injuring or killing yourself or someone else, but the financial costs of an arrest or crash are significant."

Bechen offered tips to make the holiday party season safer.

- Whenever you plan on consuming alcohol, designate a sober driver before you leave and give that person your keys.
- If you are impaired, call a taxi or sober friend or family member to get you home safely. Many taxi services offer free or discounted rides to partygoers during the holiday season.
- Promptly report drunk drivers to law enforcement. To contact the Idaho State Police, call *ISP.
- Wear your seat belt while in your car or use a helmet and protective gear when on a motorcycle. These are the best defenses against an impaired driver.
- If you know someone who is about to drive while impaired, take his or her keys and help make other safe travel arrangements.

Motorists are encouraged to plan ahead and dial 5-1-1 or visit 511.idaho.gov for the latest conditions on the state highway or interstate system in Idaho.

Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse

Check out:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/10novdec/04.cfm>

Launched in December 2009, the clearinghouse hosted more than 6,300 visits in just its first 8 months. Traffic engineers and other professionals now use the clearinghouse to answer basic questions they face every day, such as, "What is the best safety countermeasure to use?" To find applicable CMFs, users can conduct quick keyword searches from the home page or narrow their queries by countermeasure, crash type, crash severity, and roadway type. The Web site also has an advanced search feature that enables users to search by more detailed parameters, such as intersection type, traffic control, area type, and more.

State DOTs are promoting the clearinghouse to transportation officials who are conducting benefit-cost analyses. The Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), for example, uses the clearinghouse as a resource for local governments that are applying for site-specific safety funding through the State's Traffic Safety Improvement Program. When seeking grants for either new construction or improvement of traffic safety and operations at a specific site or corridor with a crash history, applicants must include benefit-cost analyses. Using worksheets provided by Iowa DOT, local transportation officials calculate the benefit-cost ratio for each potential improvement. Iowa DOT directs applicants to the CMF Clearinghouse as a starting point for these analyses and instructs them to use the CRFs there. "We especially like that in most cases there are factors that are specific to certain crash types and severities," says Tim Simodynes, a safety engineer with Iowa DOT.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) also is using the clearinghouse to provide guidance on benefit-cost analyses. With the complete list of CMFs included in the clearinghouse as a starting point, WSDOT is developing a tailored list of CMFs approved for use by the department and will distribute that list to potential applicants for local safety funding.

"Providing our agency with CMFs from the clearinghouse will enable WSDOT to better scope and prioritize our projects," says Matt Neeley, intelligent transportation systems research and planning engineer with WSDOT. "In the past, we haven't had as much information as the clearinghouse provides."

Educational Value

Another purpose of the clearinghouse is to educate transportation professionals about the application of CMFs. The Web site includes an overview of CMFs and a glossary of related terms. Users can read a list of frequently asked questions that address issues such as the difference between CMFs and CRFs, and how to apply multiple CMFs at one location. The site also includes a comprehensive resources section with links to CMF-related publications, countermeasure selection tools, and how to sign up for the *CMF Update*, the clearinghouse's e-newsletter.

Turn Bay Improvements Bring High Praise for ITD District 3 Engineers

As part of a U.S. 20 seal coat this summer, District 3 Traffic Engineer Kevin Sablan suggested and designed alterations to the intersection striping plans to essentially use excess space from the shoulders and re-stripe it for turn bays at four problematic intersections.

In late August, the intersections with Chinden at KCID Road, Northside Boulevard, Midland Boulevard and Can-Ada Road were reconfigured with turn bays. All four locations had significant accident histories. The KCID/Chinden intersection was on the High Accident Location (HAL) list for the district.

Sablan worked with Residency 1 Engineer Daris Bruce and project manager Kelley Lower to have the contractor stripe in the turn bays at each of the four locations.

It has already met with approval. On Nov. 1, members of the Caldwell Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee expressed their appreciation to District Engineer Dave Jones.

Sablan recalled that "I received a phone call from the public asking that we look at adding a turn lane at Can-Ada as part of the seal coat project; this person had noticed many close calls.

"The need for a turn bay also was brought up by our striping foreman, Jerry Richards, who drives through the area coming to and from work every day. We looked into it and found that Can-Ada, Midland, and Northside would be good candidates, as they tie right into I-84 interchanges to the south in Nampa."

KCID also was on the HAL intersection list.

"I visited all four intersections, and they all had vehicle skid marks leading up to the intersection. I contacted Canyon Highway District #4 to get their thoughts on adding turn lanes; they supported the idea."

Mona Hunt did the design and put together the plan sheet. Hunt and Sajonara Tipuric assisted Kelley in laying out the turn bays at the site.



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Fatalities by Month in Idaho

Below is our monthly report showing progress in reducing traffic deaths in Idaho. It doesn't set up perfectly and the more I mess with it, the worse it might become. It is possible we may meet our goal of no more than 219 traffic deaths in 2010. Let's never forget that these are not just numbers. They are family members that won't be home for Christmas.

**IDAHO
TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF HIGHWAY
OPERATIONS AND SAFETY
Fatalities By the Month***

November 2010

MONTH	TOTALS 3-Yr Average (07,08,09)			CUMULATIVE TOTALS 3-Yr Cum. Average (07,08,09)		
	AVERAG E	2009	2010	AVERAG E	2009	2010
JANUARY	18	11	8	18	11	8
FEBRUARY	12	17	7	31	28	15
MARCH	17	17	15	48	45	30
APRIL	17	17	11	65	62	41
MAY	24	18	16	88	80	57
JUNE	17	12	19	105	92	76
JULY	25	26	26	130	118	102
AUGUST	26	29	29	157	147	131
SEPTEMBER	26	29	28	183	176	159
OCTOBER	17	17	28	200	193	187
NOVEMBER	19	19	19	219	212	206
DECEMBER	17	14		237	226	206
YEAR TO DATE	237	226	206			

*Data limitations: This report is based on information provided by law enforcement agencies on crashes resulting in a death that occurs within 30 days of the crash.

Data is preliminary and is subject to change.

Totals of this report are the number of persons killed. Averages are rounded.